

EPA: Plans for Troy not new

By BRENT SHRUM
Western News Reporter

Recent media reports notwithstanding, no changes have been made regarding Troy's inclusion in the Libby-area Superfund cleanup, Environmental Protection Agency representatives told the Lincoln County Commissioners Wednesday.

"There's nothing new," EPA community involvement coordinator Wendy Thomi said.

Thomi was responding to a wire service story that ran in newspapers

around the state about a meeting between EPA officials and Gov. Judy Martz. The meeting was organized to update Martz on EPA activities in the Libby area, and one subject that was discussed was the inclusion of Troy in the cleanup.

Martz was apparently unaware that the federal agency has for some time been planning to clean Troy-area properties of asbestos-contaminated vermiculite, said local EPA project manager Jim Christiansen.

"It caught us off guard," Christiansen

said. "We didn't expect her to be surprised."

Reporters covering the meeting "picked up on her surprise and ran with it," Christiansen said.

The resulting media coverage gave the impression that the inclusion of Troy in the cleanup represented a new twist and a major expansion of the project.

"The headline in Butte was 'Libby nightmare grows,'" Christiansen said.

See **Troy** on Page 4

WESTERN NEWS

Libby MT 59923

Wednesday & Friday

DEC 12 2003

Superior Clipping Service

Glendive MT 406-377-6612

Troy

Continued from Page 1

Funding for cleanup work in Troy has been included as a line item in Christiansen's proposed budget for the past two years but has been cut when allocations failed to meet requested levels.

"It's in there again for 2005," Christiansen said.

Christiansen's plan is for work in Troy to be completed during the last three years of the Libby cleanup.

"At some point if we don't get funding for Troy it will begin to stretch the entire time-frame for the cleanup," he said.

Vermiculite was never mined or processed at Troy. Contamination there stems from the use of vermiculite in gardens and as insulation along with dust taken home on the clothes of vermiculite workers

who lived in Troy, Christiansen said.

Troy has been included within the boundary of the Libby Superfund project since its inception. The actual project area is "ill-defined," Christiansen said. Individual properties will be removed from the site as they are declared clean.

"There's no boundary that magically goes around Troy," Christiansen said.